

EAST AND WEST SERIES

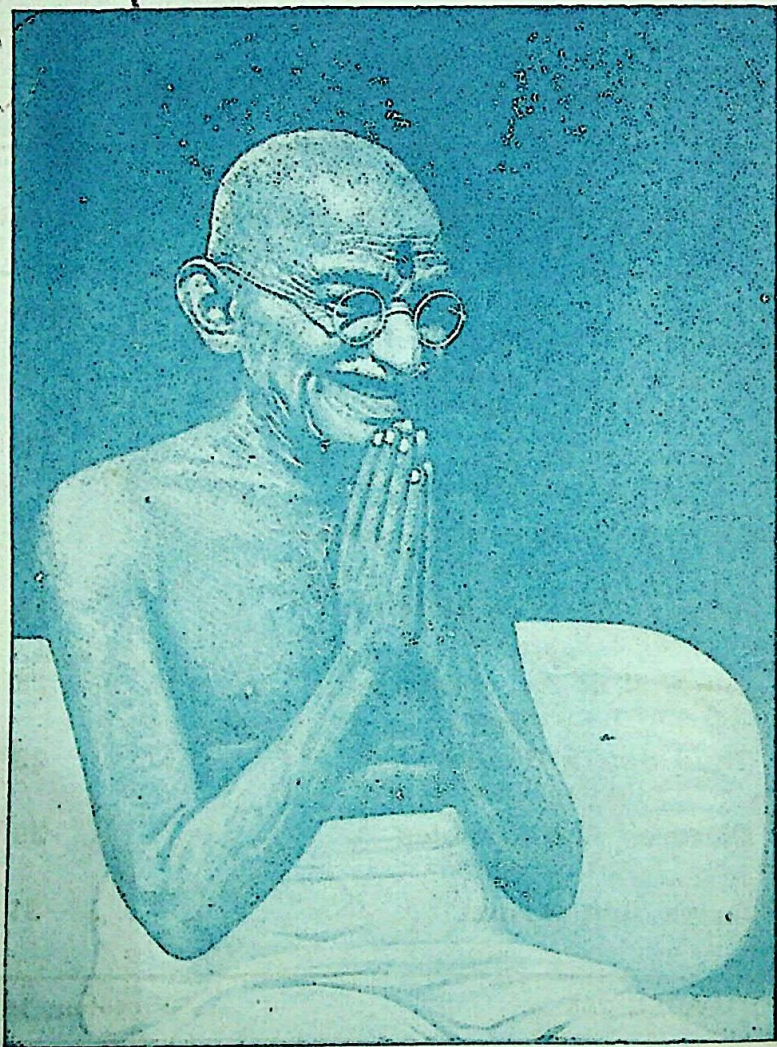
AN INTERPRETER OF THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT

LIBRARY No.....9/276 Sri Sri Ma Anandamayee Ashram VARANASI	
Gandhi: An Awakener of India By T. L. Vaswani	Page 1
The Great Miracle By Mrs. Harris Lowery	8
Sita : A Symbol of Sacrifice By T. L. Vaswani	10
Blessed Are The Merciful ! By J. P. Vaswani	13
The Call of St. Francis By T. L. Vaswani	22
Thus Spake Gandhi Daily Inspiration	23
Pictures And Parables By T. L. Vaswani	29
News And Notes	31

NUMBER 205

October, 1974

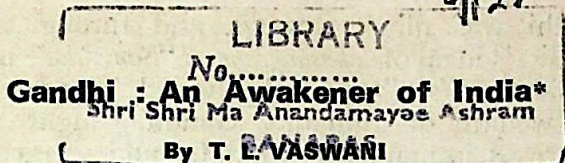
Gita Publishing House,
10 Sadhu Vaswani Path,
Poona-I, India.



MAHATMA GANDHI

“When a man sleeps under the sky, who can rob him?”

— Gandhi



The word "Gandhi" is a significant word. Its radical meaning is "fragrant." Gandhi's memory is fragrant : His life was fragrant. What was the secret of the fragrance of Gandhi? You call him Mahatma Gandhi. He was a Mahatma, a great soul. But there is one word which, to me, is dearer even than the word, Mahatma. I love to think of Gandhi as a brother,—brother Gandhi. A brother was he,—a brother, a burden-bearer of the millions of this ancient land.

On one occasion, Gandhi spoke the words which I cannot easily forget. Gandhi said :—"I would rather be torn to pieces than disown my brothers and sisters in suffering and pain!" He saw an image of God in every one, in the drunkard, in the gambler, in those who went astray. Gandhi saw God's image in the sinner,—an image of Divine Love. He forgot everything except the needs of his brothers and sisters. His brothers and sisters were all.

To him, India was not a country apart, but a part of humanity. On one occasion, Gandhi spoke the following significant words. He said :—"My idea of nationalism is that my country may become free and, if need be, the whole of my country may die, if only the human race may live." To Gandhi, India was a part of humanity.

* Being notes of a talk delivered to the Gita Class, Poona. October 2 is sacred as Mahatma Gandhi's birth anniversary.

Gandhi was filled, through and through, with the Gita's ideal of *lokasangraha*. "*Sangraha*" means "welfare" : "*loka*" means the "world," "humanity." The welfare of humanity Gandhi sought : the welfare of humanity is what Gandhi worked for. This concept Gandhi never forgot. On one occasion, Gandhi said :—"I am wedded to India, because I believe that India has a mission for the world."

Himself a servant of all, he wanted India to be a servant of humanity. The idea of exploitation, of one nation dominating another, was alien to Gandhi's nature. Gandhi stood for the great ideal of *lokasangraha*, of *seva*, service.

When, in November 1948, I came from Karachi to Bombay, I saw so many sleeping on the roadside, at night, shivering in the cold of winter. I saw so many in tattered clothes, hungry and homeless. And I said to myself :—"They, too, are my brothers and my sisters."

I visited what you call "refugee camps." I met so many of my people who had travelled to Bombay from Sind. I saw how they were crowded, and my eyes were touched with tears. I saw so many whom you call "refugees," but whom you should love and call your "brothers." They, several lakhs of them, are homeless, shelterless. And I said to myself :—"My people are your people, as your people are my people!" This thought will grow in the measure in which we believe in the brotherhood of man. The teaching of brotherhood, Gandhi illumined in his sacrificial life.

In 1932, Gandhi went to London, as the leader of the Indian Delegation, to discuss with the British Government the problem of India's freedom.

He was a guest of the British Government : and they made arrangements for his stay in one of the best quarters of London. But Gandhi preferred to live in the East End of London,—a quarter of the poor folk. How they loved him! They came to him, again and again. They had free access to him. Children of the poor folk became his friends in his morning walks. When he left London, he left behind, in the little room where he stayed, a spinning wheel and one of his sandals. A poor Londoner, seeing these two simple things of Gandhi, said :—"O, we all liked Gandhi. He got along famous with us people here. Some folks couldn't understand what he meant when he talked about praying and giving things to the poor. We could understand him, and we loved him!"

Some of you may know, perhaps, that three times he was attacked by infuriated mobs. He pardoned all who attacked him. On one occasion, indeed, he was beaten so hard that he fell down unconscious. They thought Gandhi was dead : and they threw his body in a ditch. When he recovered consciousness, Gandhi said :—"Go not in search of the men who struck me down. I forgive them all!"

Gandhi was a brother to all. He never thought of the sins of the people who worked against him. A rich lawyer with an income of ten to twelve thousand rupees, he renounced everything to take up the cause of the poor. He became an advocate of the poor people. Gandhi became poor for the sake of the poor. Like Saint Francis of Assisi, he embraced poverty in order to serve the people.

Coming to India from South Africa, Gandhi

travelled from place to place. He saw the cities and the villages of India : and he saw the tragedy of the poor. He found that the village-folk were reduced to skeletons. He saw the sad plight of the labourers. He stopped at the huts of thousands of poor people. He knocked at the doors of the poor, as one of them. Clad in simple, homespun, he knocked at the doors of the poor village-folk : and the doors were opened to him. He sat on the floor with the poor village people and had heart to heart talks with them. He saw the sad state of those who were called "outcasts" and "untouchables." He saw how they were condemned to do menial work. Day after day, India went on living its conventional life, not thinking of the untouchables. Gandhi thought of them, and Gandhi served them, so well.

Gandhi saw the village-folk, ill-fed, ill-clad, malaria-ridden, fear-ridden : he saw the village-folk dying. They are dying at this hour, too. And thinking of how India's villages are decaying, I sometimes think of another country. I am not a communist. But I think, again and again, of Russia. And I recall the words of an English visitor to that country. He said :— "In all Russia, I saw not a single hungry person!"

In India, once the land of plenty, what terrible poverty we have today! What pinched, starved faces I see around me! Suffering still covers the country, from one end to the other. In those early days, when I went, from town to town, from village to village, visiting many parts of the country, speaking to the people of *swaraj*, there was in my eyes a dream that when *swaraj* would arrive, the village-people would be happy. When

arrives *arrives*, I said, India's manhood will be re-built. Alas! the dream in my eyes remains a dream!

Gandhi was a brother of the poor and lowly, of the outcast and the untouchable, not in words but in deeds of daily life. On one occasion, he said :—"If after death, I am to be re-born, I should wish to be of the untouchables, so that I may share their sorrows and serve them!" What love in the heart of this man of God, this servant of humanity, this mighty interpreter and exemplifier of India's true spiritual culture, which most of us are forgetting, today!

The "partition" of India took place in a day which, I believe, many who come after us will regret. Mahatma Gandhi, at that time, was at Noakhali. He got the news of the sufferings of the people. He heard of the people being murdered : and he learnt of the mass-migration of the people. And like a little child, Gandhi began to weep. He shed tears when he learnt of the suffering of the people.

Many years ago, there came to India a visitor from Holland. He came to Sind and met me at Karachi. He had travelled much. He had visited Russia and Persia. He had come in contact with different types of sympathy and culture. He had studied a little of the civilisation of the West. And he said to me that he had come to India, for he had been told that India was the cradle of a simple, spiritual civilisation. Coming to India, however, he was deeply disappointed. For in India, he saw how a number of women were in veil. He saw that women were dominated by men. He saw school-masters beating their

pupils,—the little children who were under the protection of angels in heaven. He saw,—and he was shocked! And he said to me:—"What shocks me the most is the appalling poverty of the bulk of the people." And he said further :—"Is there not a single man to take up the cause of the poor, down-trodden people?" At that time Mahatma Gandhi was in South Africa. And the visitor from Holland did not know that one was coming to India, who would be a servant of the poor and who would bring a new awakening to the Indian nation. Gandhi,—brother Gandhi,—was destined to be the man of whom the visitor from Holland spoke.

Gandhi was a careful student of the Gita. The following words from the Gita,—the words of Sri Krishna unto Arjuna,—he tells us, went straight into his heart :—"Surrendering all actions to Me, O Arjuna! with mind intent on the *Atman*, put away thy weakness and arise to action!" And in these words of the Gita, Gandhi gave his great message to India :—"Put away thy weakness! Away with fear! Arise to action!"

Gandhi arises to action. He dedicates his action to the Lord. His work becomes *loka-sangraha* : and his work becomes a *yagna*. In the life of Gandhi I see a blend of this two-fold truth of the Gita :—*karma*, action, offered as (1) *lokasangraha* and (2) *yagna*.

Mahatma Gandhi was, essentially, a man of faith. His movement was one of faith. From time to time, he came, face to face, with difficulties and disappointments : but Gandhi retained his faith in God. Periods of darkness came upon him : but he never gave up his faith in God.

And he turned for inspiration to the *Bhagavad Gita*. He found his inspiration, also, in Tulsi's *Ramayana*. Gandhi called it the greatest book in the devotional literature of the world. He found much in these two scriptures to strengthen him in his struggle against the British Empire. He did not exaggerate when he referred to the Gita as his "Mother." Much he owed to the Gita, much more than many seem to be aware of. And he was influenced, also, by the "Sermon on the Mount," which he read in South Africa. And Gandhi found his inspiration in *Rama Nama*, the Holy Name.

May the inspiration of *Rama Nama* return to us, in these days! Alas! we are forgetting Gandhi, and we are forgetting the great ideals of India, and we are forgetting the inspiration of the Gita and the inspiration of *Rama Nama*.

And in my heart is a lonely cry :—"When will the day return, when we shall think of Beloved Gandhi as a living reality in our life? When?"

Convert Enemies Into Friends

Saturate yourself in any of Gandhi's own writings. It is like stepping out of a hurricane into gentle healing rains. Ahimsa, he says, means never wishing ill to the enemy, the desire to serve the enemy equally with the friend, and not wanting the enemy out of the way, even by divine agency. Gandhi's aim was not to conquer except by love, not to coerce, but to convert. "The acid test of nonviolence is that, in a nonviolent conflict, no rancour is left behind and enemies are converted into friends." And this in fact was what did happen in India between Indians and British.

—Marie B. Byles

The Great Miracle

BY MRS. HARRIS LOWERY

Have you slowed down to realise how blessed you are that you can feed yourself?

Are you thankful that you can see ?

Can you walk ?

My beloved grandson, David Harris DeBerry, was helpless from a forceps' injury at birth. A brain operation at Johns Hopkins when he was two years old, excruciating pain and crushing disappointments could not defeat him.

Inability to skip or to play hide-and-seek during childhood, or later to accept five scholarships, or to write a nuclear physics theory, or to move his feet and head on the bed while he reclined flat on his back without a pillow in order to breathe, were insuperable obstacles which seemed only to empower him.

When David was five years old, he would sit on the lawn and clock his cousin Boo while his fleet playmate practised running around the house. Later, when his ten-second cousin competed in contests, David also raced,—though vicariously,—as he yelled:—"Go, Boo, go !"

Imagine having constant continuous double vision. Think of not being able to brush away a biting mosquito from your face, or to turn a page.

When David was a little boy, he asked eagerly, "Mother, if I am healed, do you think it would be all right for me to play football?"

But there was never the first complaint about anything. He cheered his husky, athletic friends from the sidelines, encased in a brace, unable even to clap his hands.

David prayed for these buddies, for relatives, for strangers, for everyone. We heard him whisper:—"Thank Thee, Holy Father, for giving us so much of Yonr time."

After twenty-seven years of indescribable perseverance, David's triumph was revealed in his prayers. More than once he prayed these words:—"Holy Father, if we thanked Thee every breath throughout eternity, we could never thank Thee enough."

That August day, David said to his mother, sitting on the side of his bed, "Do you remember when I was a little boy, Mother, you said to me, 'David, if you are ever kidnapped, do not be afraid because the worst thing that can happen is death,—and what would be more wonderful than to be with Jesus'?"

A few days later, David said, "Mother, if I should go to heaven with this sickness, please don't go into a depression."

The next night in the Palm Beach Hospital his parents were beside his bed. His mother prayed and then said, "Good night, angel, go to sleep in Jesus' arms."

David whispered, "Good night, dear." He went to sleep and to heaven,—cerebral thrombosis.

I know that such inexplicable peace and joy are miracles.

If David could will himself to live happily, anyone can.

—*Fellowship in Prayer*

Sita,—A Symbol of Sacrifice

By T. L. VASWANI

The Diwali is Hindu India's Feast of Lights. The Dussehra* and the Diwali are our annual Festivals in honour of Sri Rama. In these Festivals I hear a voice of love and gratitude,—love for the Aryan Ideal, gratitude to Sri Rama for the great victory over Ravana. It was a victory of the Aryan Ideal over a sense-dominated civilisation represented by Ravana.

The Aryan Ideal represented sense-control, purity in personal and social life. The cult of of the naked sweeping swiftly over the West is the very opposite of the Aryan Ideal. Dussehra is a reminder to us of the victory of the Aryan Ideal.

I confess I feel in me a gravitation to the Aryan Ideal. I feel its beauty. I find it difficult to describe it as I would if I were asked to describe the beauty of the flower or the butterfly.

Out of the strong comes sweetness. And Sri Rama, the warrior, had such sweet, tender love for the poor. He gave them love : he lighted up the manhood of the poor. He would not be a guest of the Rajas and the Rishis. He blessed the cottage of poor Shabri.

Both Rama and Sita are pictures of *tapasya*. "I will go to the forest with thee," she says to Rama, leaving to Arundhati her jewels and necklaces. She goes with Rama, leaving the palace, to be with him in exile and spend the years in

* October 25 is the sacred Dussehra Day.

the *tapobana*. She has renounced her all to be in the company of Sri Rama, her Lord. She eats the coarse forest food which Rama takes. She suffers separation from Rama when forcibly taken away by Ravana, to far-off Lanka. She passes through the fire, after being re-united with Rama. She spends her last days in *tapasya* in the Rishi's hermitage. "From my birth," she says, "sorrow marked me, child of the earth. I seek in *tapasya* the breast of my mother." Not without reason is Sita, revered as *Loka-mata*, the World-mother.

Sita is unparalleled in all history. Helen of ancient Greece had singular beauty. But in Sita, beauty was blended with purity and spirituality. Helen was the woman natural, Sita the woman divine : and divinity shines in *tapasya*.

Is not the very name "Sita" significant? It means "furrow of the plough." The furrow does hard work in the earth. Sita, a child of the palace, —Sita, full of grace and beauty, was destined to be trained in a school of hardness, *tapasya*.

Soon after she married Rama, Dasratha asked his son to go into exile for fourteen years. Rama said he must not take Sita with him to the forest, for the forest was a world of fear, full of bears and tigers and wolves and lions and wild elephants, demons and serpents : and Sita would get no food in the forest, except sour fruits and roots, and she must, in the forest, sleep on stony ground. Then to Rama, Sita said with tears in her eyes that to be with him was to be in a palace, that a long journey with him would be a joy, that sour fruits would be sweet as the food of the gods,

and that if he left her, her heart would break.

How much she suffered in the forest and, later, in Lanka, when forcibly removed by Ravana! And after Rama's victory over Ravana, she was called upon to go through the fire. Sita's was a path not of roses but of flames. Sita was the very picture of *tapasya*. Therefore, history remembers her and salutes her as an immortal. Money and power pass away : what lives and is cherished as sacred in the memory of the universe is sacrifice. It is the Eternal in time. Sita stands for all times a symbol of sacrifice.

The world has worshipped wealth and power. But the richest wealth is self-offering, the greatest power is *tapasya*. To live is to breed,—say many, today. To live is to sacrifice,— says India.

The supreme lesson of the Ramayana is *tapasya*. It is the lesson of Hindu literature and of the Hindu Faith. To enrich their lives with the wealth of *tapasya*, India's kings and princes left palaces and went upon the quest. And they did *tapasya* not as pessimists sick of the world, but in the immense faith of the optimist, believing that life is a festival, a sacrament, a communion with the Beautiful.

A Zen Story

Two monks, one older, one young, came to a muddy ford where a pretty girl was waiting to cross. The elder picked her up and carried her over the water. As they went along, the younger, horrified at the act of his brother monk in touching a woman, kept on commenting upon it, until at last the elder exclaimed :—"What ! Are you still carrying that girl ? I put her down as soon as we crossed the water !"

Blessed Are The Merciful !

By J. P. VASWANI

I saw him from afar. He was crossing a farm on the outskirts of our little town. There was a lonely majesty about his tall, slender figure which drew me to him as irresistibly as a lotus flower draws a bumble-bee.

The dust of the road was upon him. He was clothed in a single garment,—a shirt which touched his knees : it was soiled in many places. He looked poor : and yet he walked as though he were the king of all the earth.

I quickened my pace and drew near to him. And as I gazed into his radiant face,—beautiful as candles burning in the night,—my heart quivered within me.

“Who are you?” I asked him.

“I am a pilgrim,” he said, “a wayfarer to the City of Truth and Love.”

“What is your name?” I asked.

“I have no name,” he answered. “But in the country beyond yon hills, they call this body *masta*, mad. You, too, may call me by that name, if you will.”

I recalled Beloved Dadaji’s words:—“It is the ‘mad’ men who are the true ‘supermen,’ the true makers of history.” And I said :—“You are not *masta* but *Sarmasta*, Love-mad, God-intoxicated. In your eyes is the Light of God and your words are vibrant with the music of the Eternal. I shall call you not *masta* but Master.”

He smiled : in his smile was the loveliness and fragrance of roses which do not grow in our earthly gardens.

"May I walk with you?" I ventured.

"The earth belongs to Allah,—the Eternal!" he said. "And whosoever likes may walk on it!"

I walked near him full of admiration and wonder. I found how, from time to time, he bent low to pick up small worms out of the way, lest they be trodden under the feet of men.

A young man passed by. In one of his hands was a basket in which were imprisoned a number of tiny birds.

The Master called out to him :—"Brother beloved! where dost thou go carrying these little creatures of God?"

The young man answered :—"They are the birds I have been able to capture after a whole day's weary waiting. I take them to the market in the hope that I shall get a good buyer."

The Master said :—"Brother of my heart! wilt thou wait a while and let me have a look at the little ones in the basket?"

The young man held out the basket before the Master. He looked long and tenderly at the little birds, already half-dead in fear of approaching death. His eyes were flooded with unbidden tears as he said :—"Little children of God, your day is not yet! In their ignorance,—and cruelty which is a child of ignorance,—men catch you and kill you. Alas! they kill you and eat you! Ah! but I can see that a Tomorrow is coming when men will regard you as their younger brothers and sisters in the one family of Him whose Name is Love!"

There was a note of plaintiveness in his words and the heart of the young man was moved. And he said :—"I know not who you are, O strange man of God! But this I know that I shall not feel happy until I have surrendered all the birds to you. Take them and do with them what you will,—and bless me!"

The Master received the basket as though he had received the crown of a king. One by one, he took the birds out of the basket, gently stroked them, spoke to them a few loving words and set them free. As the birds flew away, they sang in joy.

The Master felt happy as a wave dancing on the sea. And I said to him :—"They who know tell us that Life can never be killed. It is the forms which perish. Why then must we feel sad if birds and animals are slaughtered?"

And he said :—"Life, it is true, is eternal. It is, also, true that the law of Life is Compassion and Love. Out of Love cometh joy and every other blessing. He who hath not experienced Love hath not known what it is to live.

"All killing is a denial of Love. For to kill or to eat what another has killed is to rejoice in cruelty. And cruelty hardens our heart and blinds our vision and we see not that they whom we kill are our brothers' and sisters in the one Family of Creation."

The Master continued :—"He who kills another kills himself. He who feeds on death himself becomes food for death. He who inflicts suffering upon another brings suffering to himself. Such is the law!

"Every bit of flesh you tear, you will, one day,

be called upon to repair with your own flesh! Every limb you mutilate, you will be compelled to replace with your own limb! And every bone you break, you will be asked to mend with your own bone!"

And I said :—"Master! what of those who eat corn and vegetables and fruits? There is life in them, too!"

And picking up a smooth, round pebble from the ground, the Master said :—"There is life in this pebble, also! Nothing, nothing is without life. The One Life is in all,—in sand and stone, in stream and star, in sun and moon, in fruit and flower, in man and mineral, in bird and animal. In some, however, life is asleep : in others life doth dream : in yet others life hath begun to stir : in a few, only few, life is fully awake!

"In minerals and in plants, in vegetables and in fruits, life doth slumber still. Different is the case with birds and animals. So it is that they feel the joy of living and the agony of dying. The bird singing on yon tree, the faithful dog following his master, the horse drawing the carriage,—they have reached the stage of 'duality.' They are sensitive to pleasure and pain. Like us, they, too, are moving on towards the goal : the goal is 'unity.' Their way is long and laborious. And we must help them in their onward march. Help them, and you will be helped! Hinder them, and you but raise obstacles in your own path!"

And I said :—"Master! what of those who work in research laboratories, seeking new knowledge concerning disease and its cure? Their experiments bring untold torture to innocent animals.

Monkeys and guinea pigs and other mute creatures are grotesquely distorted and mutilated : they are made to suffer indescribable agony."

The Master's face was filled with wrath as he said :—"Knowledge is not knowledge which is acquired in cruel ways. Such ill-gotten knowledge is a curse : it unleashes the very forces of hell and will hurl humanity into a dark abyss of disease and death. Knowledge, if it is to be a source of blessing to humanity, must never be sought through the torturing of helpless creatures. True knowledge springs from compassion and love."

Just then we passed by a wood-cutter who was chopping down a tree. And to him the Master said :—"Brother woodcutter! must you chop off the whole tree? Will you not leave a portion of the trunk and give it a chance to grow up again?"

It was the hour of evening twilight. The sun was slowly going down to his rest. We walked through a rich man's garden in the heart of the town.

The Master said :—"Let us rest awhile on that stone slab underneath the tree."

Scarcely had we sat ourselves down on the stone than the owner of the garden put in his appearance and called out in a haughty voice :—"What are you vagabonds doing here at this approaching hour of the night?"

In his sweet, gentle voice, the Master said :—"I have walked from dawn to dusk. I bethought of resting here for a while before taking to the road again."

"This is no resting-place," the rich man snarled. "Do you not know this is my garden? Get thee gone!"

"I know that this is neither your garden nor my garden."

"Then whose garden, think you, this is?"

"This garden, like all other gardens, belongs to Mother Earth!"

"Nonsense!" the rich man growled. "Get out of here, or I shall call my bulldog to tear you into pieces!" So saying, he called out :—"Jackie!"

A huge fierce-looking dog came running. I felt frightened and perspiration flowed down my legs. The Master sat calm and unmoved. He held me firmly by my hand as though to assure me.

The dog came close to us, then looked at the Master. A sudden change came over the fierce-looking creature. The dog became gentle as a lamb and lay down at the feet of the Master. He gave a loving pat to the dog and said to me :—"In a most wonderful way do animals respond to love. Alas! we torture them, thinking that they have no feelings, no heart and soul."

The Master arose and, turning to the rich man, said :—"If this be your garden and you will not have us rest here for a while, we go! And may the Peace of God be with you!"

I followed the Master and when we reached the gates of the garden, I said to him :—"Not far off is the little cottage where I stay with my mother and sister. Our house is small and we will serve you with but a simple meal. Yet if you are with us, our hut will be to us a palace!"

And he said :—"Gladly shall I be your guest for the night!"

Within a few minutes we reached our house. Before entering, the Master paused at the threshold for a brief moment and said :—"The Peace

of God shine on this house and on all who dwell in it!"

My mother and my sister felt overjoyed to have him in the house. My sister clung fast to the hem of his garment as though she were afraid he might leave us too soon and go out into the night.

We sat to our simple repast. He ate so little. When I pressed him to eat more, he said :—"I am no stranger but one of you! Be at ease!" It was as though he were the host and we were his guests.

Then he said :—"The body needs so little to sustain it. The less you give it, the more you get out of it. The more you give it, the less you get out of it. I say this because I know it!"

When the Master finished eating, he went and sat in the open verandah. We followed him and sat around him. He spoke to us of the wonders of earth and heaven which are revealed to the pure in heart : and the heart to be pure, he said, must be dipped in the dye of compassion and love.

It was then that he said to me :—"I suppose you are a vegetarian."

"I am a life-long vegetarian," I answered, not without a feeling of pride.

Looking long into mine eyes, as though he looked into the very depths of my heart, he said :—"Are you sure you are a vegetarian?"

The tone of his voice baffled me and made me feel humble. And I answered :—"Master! I understand not! Perhaps, I am not a vegetarian yet. Deign to speak to me of the marks of him who is a true vegetarian."

And he said :—"The true vegetarian, as I think of him, is filled through and through with reverence

for life. He reveres life as a gift of God which no man can bestow and, therefore, may not destroy. Such an one has the following marks:—

1. His heart is a flowing river of compassion and love. The basis of true compassion is a feeling of unity, of oneness with all creatures that have the breath of life. I and that tiny winged creature that hovers round yon lamp are one. Men and animals and birds, fish and fowl, moths and mosquitoes,—all, all are one,—in the One without whom there is no other.

To the true vegetarian, therefore, each life-unit is as dear and precious as his own life. To him every dumb creature of God is his own self wearing another body. And so the true vegetarian will be no party to any movement for 'humane' slaughter. On his banner are inscribed the words in letters of light:—"Stop *all* slaughter!"

2. The true vegetarian is a man of self-discipline. So many there be who do not *eat* flesh but, alas! they easily *succumb* to the flesh. They cannot resist the temptations of the flesh. They are soft : they have not put out the fire of passion. The true vegetarian is unswayed by passion, unruffled by anger, unmoved by greed of gold.

3. The true vegetarian is a man of humility. Deep in his heart he knows that he is not free from the sin of killing. For to breathe is to kill,—the germs that are in the air around us. To talk is to kill : to walk is to kill. Indeed, to live is to kill.

4. Living in such a world, the true vegetarian becomes a worshipper, a man of prayer. He sees cruelty all around him. How many hearts can he touch? How many lives can he save? And so he turns to Him who is the One Saviour of all.

The true vegetarian prays alike for the killer and the killed : and he prays that he may become an instrument of God's love in this world of pain.

5. The true vegetarian is a man of indomitable faith. He believes profoundly that life is entirely a gift of God. In periods of crises, in times of famine and flood, his mind wavers not! He prefers starvation to eating fish or flesh. On his sick-bed he is not lured into eating impure food. To the Sufi dervish, Abu Ala Maccera, his physician said :—'O man of God! why will you not live longer and bless this earth? Eat this chicken soup I have brought you and see how quickly health and strength return to your feeble body.' The dervish laughed a hearty laugh and said :—'Must you offer me the soup of a weak, defenceless creature who cannot strike in return? It is not worthy of you! Bring me the soup of a lion's cub!'

These and several other things the Master spake to me on that memorable night. And though this happened many years ago, I have been visited by the memory of that night a thousand times. Many of his words are graven as with chisels on the tablet of my heart.

Friend of the Friendless

Keats was of a slight and delicate physique. But a kind and stout heart beat within that frame. One day a friend visited the poet and found him nursing a black eye. Some time before Keats had seen a butcher tormenting a kitten. Keats wanted to stop that. The result was a fight between the frail poet and the sturdy butcher which had lasted for an hour until friends intervened.

— *Anecdotes of the Great*

The Call of Saint Francis

By T. L. VASWANI

October 4 is sacred to the memory of St. Francis.

In his eyes was wonder. He mingled with men. His was a spirit unique, simple and profound, loving the lowly and communing with the dove.

Like another Buddha, he travelled from place to place, looking on all with the eyes of compassion and speaking to every one the message which is the gift alike of Krishna and Buddha, of Nanak and Christ to everyone :—"Brother, peace be unto you!"

Simple was he and pure in heart, this Christ-intoxicated lover of life. He saw Eternity in the leper and the lowly: and in every planet and every stone he saw a Presence that thrilled him with a sense of Divine Joy.

The Universe became to him a Brotherhood : and he sang canticles to Brother Sun and Sister Fire, to Brother Bird and Sister Moon.

The unspeakable poetry of his life called multitudes to religion and the simple, heart-felt Way of Jesus.

Europe does not follow Francis now : but after she has gone through the cycle of war and violence, she will be born again. And Europe reborn, will hear his call to the simple life and realise that Francis, more than any other in the modern era, resembles Jesus.

St. Francis is to me a Voice and Symbol of that New Age which will speak the message :—"Be simple and fearless : and seek thy Treasure in thy Soul."

[Excerpts from the utterances and writings of Mahatma Gandhi]

Nature has so made us that we do not see our backs; it is reserved for others to see them. Hence it is wise to profit by what they see.

I am a man of faith. My reliance is solely on God. One step is enough for me. The next step He will make clear to me when time for it comes.

Bitter experience has taught me that all temples are not houses of God. They can be habitations of the devil. These places of worship have no value unless the keeper is a good man of God. Temples, mosques, churches are what man makes them to be.

God cannot cease to be because hideous immoralities or inhuman brutalities are committed in His name. He is long-suffering. He is patient but He is also terrible. And withal He is ever forgiving for He always gives us the chance to repent.

God metes out the same measure to us that we mete out to our neighbours,—men and brutes.

The rich have a superfluous store of things which

they do not need and which are, therefore, neglected and wasted; while millions starve and are frozen to death for want of them. If each retained possession only of what he needed, none would be in want and all would live in contentment.

October 7

Truth is Gentle

In my opinion the Sanskrit text सत्यं वृयात् प्रियं वृयात् । न वृयात् सत्यमप्रियम् ॥ (*Satyam bruyat priyam bruyat, Na bruyat satyamapriyam*) means that one should speak the truth in gentle language. One had better not speak it, if one cannot do so in a gentle way, meaning thereby that there is no truth in a man who cannot control his tongue.

October 8

Do not Bargain!

Never own defeat in a sacred cause and make up your minds henceforth that you will be pure and that you will find a response from God. But God never answers the prayers of the arrogant, nor the prayers of those who bargain with Him.

October 9

Smoking

I have a horror of smoking as of wines. Smoking I consider to be a vice. It deadens one's conscience and is often worse than drink in that it acts imperceptibly. It is a habit which is difficult to get rid of when once it seizes hold of a person. It is an expensive vice. It fouls the breath, discolours teeth and some times even causes cancer. It is an unclean habit.

October 10

Infallible Help

When your passions threaten to get the better of you, go down on your knees and cry out to God for help. *Rama Nama* is my infallible Help.

October 11

Brittle as Glass

This earthly existence of ours is more brittle than the glass bangle that ladies wear. You can

keep glass bangles for thousands of years, if you treasure them in a chest and let them remain untouched. But this earthly existence is so fickle that it may be wiped out in the twinkling of an eye.

October 12

Prayer

As food is necessary for the body, prayer is necessary for the soul. A man may be able to do without food, for a number of days,—as Mac Swiney did for over seventy days,—but, believing in God, man cannot, should not, live a moment without prayer.

October 13

Confession

Confession of error is like a broom that sweeps away dirt and leaves the surface cleaner than before.

October 14

Healers of Souls

We want healers of souls rather than of bodies. The multiplicity of hospitals and medical men is no sign of true civilisation. The less we and others pamper our bodies the better for us and the world.

October 15

Love

Love never claims, it ever gives. Love ever suffers, never resents, never revenges itself.

October 16

Are You a Thief?

I suggest we are thieves in a way. If I take anything that I do not need for my own immediate use and keep it, I thieve it from somebody else.

October 17

Men of God

There is no one without faults, not even men of God. They are men of God not because they are faultless but because they know their own faults, they strive against them, they do not hide them and are ever ready to correct themselves.

October 18

Untouchability

Untouchability poisons Hinduism as a drop of arsenic poisons milk.

October 19

Fast and Pray

My religion teaches me that whenever there is distress, which one cannot remove, one must fast and pray.

October 20

They That Struggle, Win!

'Be thou certain, none can perish, trusting Me,' says the Lord, but let it not be understood to mean that our sins will be washed away by merely trusting Him without any striving. Only he who struggles hard against the allurements of sense objects and turns in tears and grief to the Lord will be comforted.

October 21

End of Knowledge

All our learning or recitation of the Vedas, correct knowledge of Sanskrit, Latin, Greek and what not will avail us nothing if they do not enable us to cultivate absolute purity of heart. The end of all knowledge must be building up of character.

October 22

Parent of Crime

I hold drink to be more damnable than thieving and perhaps even prostitution. Is it not often the parent of both?

October 23

Believe and Achieve!

Man often becomes what he believes himself to be. If I keep on saying to myself that I cannot do a certain thing, it is possible that I may end by really becoming incapable of doing it. On the contrary, if I have the belief that I can do it, I shall surely acquire the capacity to do it even if I may not have it at the beginning.

October 24

Humility

The seeker after truth should be humbler than

the dust. The world crushes the dust under its feet, but the seeker after truth should so humble himself that even the dust could crush him. Only then, and not until then, will he have a glimpse of truth.

October 25

Reduce Your Wants

Our civilisation, our culture, our Swaraj depend not upon multiplying our wants,—self-indulgence,—but upon restricting our wants,—self-denial.

October 26

God Helps

If you would ask Him to help you, you should go to Him in all your nakedness, approach Him without reservations, also without fear or doubts as to how He can help a fallen being like you. He who has helped millions who have approached Him, is He going to desert you?

October 27

Divine Guidance

God is the hardest taskmaster I have known on this earth, and He tries you through and through. And when you find that your faith is failing or your body is failing you, and you are sinking, He comes to your assistance somehow or other and proves to you that you must not lose your faith and that He is always at your beck and call, but on His terms, not on your terms. So I have found. I cannot really recall a single instance when, at the eleventh hour, He has forsaken me.

October 28

Way to End Poverty

I venture to suggest that it is the fundamental law of Nature, without exception, that Nature produces enough for our wants from day to day, and if only everybody took enough for himself and nothing more, there would be no pauperism in this world, there would be no man dying of starvation in this world.

October 29

Priceless Possession

An innocent youth is a priceless possession not to be squandered away for the sake of a momentary excitement, miscalled pleasure.

October 30

Take care of Your Thoughts

Always aim at purifying your thoughts and everything will be well. There is nothing more potent than thought. Deed follows word and word follows thought.

October 31

Faith

A man without faith is like a drop thrown out of the ocean bound to perish. Every drop in the ocean shares its majesty and has the honour of giving us the ozone of life.

News And Notes [*Contd. from page 32*]

Their wages in certain cases are subsidised liberally by the Welfare Fund.

Recently, the work of this Unit has been extended to Pimpri Colony, where it has become a boon to many a needy sister. About 350 sisters earn their livelihood through the embroidery and stitching work provided by the "Industrial Unit." May it move on from strength to strength !

Bal Kunj

The Bal Kunj for girls, started 6 years ago, under the auspices of the "Mira Union." Our sister, Miss H. P. Vaswani, ex-Principal, St. Mira's High School and St. Mira's English-Medium School, is the enthusiastic organiser of this useful activity. In these days, when schools and colleges throw no light on the inspiring lives of the great seers of ancient India, this little institution has sprung up as an oasis in the surrounding desert of oblivion.

The Bal Kunj is a fellowship of over 50 girls of different communities, receiving education in different schools. They hold weekly meetings where they study the lives of saints. The students make it a point to bring with themselves a handful of grain, each, for the birds. They have a special library, they go for excursions, and have various healthy activities. This beautiful budding institution has brought joy to many girls. We wish it all success !

Pictures and Parables

By T. L. VASWANI

BLESSED ARE THE PURE

Matilda was a queen of Denmark. But a party of ambitious men conspired against her. She suffered much. She was imprisoned in a castle until her death. She found consolation in a prayer she wrote on the window of her prison:—"O Lord! keep me pure : make others great."

SCHOPENHAUER'S COMRADE

For almost 30 years, Schopenhauer lived in two rooms in a boarding house with no comrades but a dog. Strange enough, he called the dog by the name, "Atma," (God; the World-Soul)! How faithful is the dog! Has not the dog, too, the human emotion of gratitude? And is not the dog, also, a manifestation of God, the *Atman*?

THE LUMINOUS GIRL

Anna was a luminous girl. She gave off luminous rays. Anna suffered much. She bore it all in a spirit of religious resignation. Suffering borne heroically is transmuted into light. The world gives hard knocks from time to time. Bear heroically, with hate toward none, with love for all, and your life will become luminous.

SILENCE STRENGTHENS!

Schopenhauer was a great German philosopher. He could not bear noise. It interferes with original thinking. Go into silence, if you will think for

yourself. Silence strengthens thought-power. Silence also, helps the *buddhi*,—intuitional self,—to express itself. To go into silence is to grow in God.

FASTING CURES

Sinclair, the author of *Love's Pilgrimage*, says he suffered a good deal from ill health, but cured himself by a prolonged fast. It brought back health. Fast helps the renewal of life. What fast is to the body, *tapasya* is to the soul. The modern world suffers much from pleasure-pursuits. The maladies of modern life may be traced to *bhoga*. Its cure is *tapasya*.

FOR A GLASS OF WINE

There is a story told of Lysimachus. He sold his kingdom for a glass of wine! And true it is of so many that they sell their kingdom,—the kingdom of the soul,—for a trifle,—a glass of wine!

PIPPA'S SONG

"God's in His Heaven,"—sings Pippa, in that pretty little poem of Browning. "God's in His Heaven,"—yes! But Pippa should have added:—"The Heaven is in the heart."

PREFERRED DEATH TO FALSEHOOD

Sydney, the English patriot, was one day told that he could save his life if only he would deny his own handwriting. And this is the stern reply recorded of him by his biographers:—"When God has brought me into a dilemma in which I must either tell a lie or lose my life, He gives me a clear indication of my duty, which is to prefer death to falsehood."

News and Notes

By "GULSHAN"

Lokasangraha Award For Dr. Sanchetti

Many years ago, Mr. Rijhumal Panjumar,—a man whose heart was filled with love for those in suffering and pain,—created an endowment. The annual interest on the endowment is given away every year, on the sacred Jan-mashtami Day, in small coins, in the shape of an award to the one whose heart is filled with the spirit of service.

This year, the award was presented to Dr. K. H. Sanchetti, an Orthopaedic Surgeon of all-India fame, who had served Mrs. Rijhumal Panjumar with great love. In addition, a small purse of Rs. 501/- was presented to him, in behalf of the Brotherhood.

Brother J. P. Vaswani and Shri Gangaram Sajandas spoke highly of the eminent Surgeon, saying that "his heart flowed in an endless stream of sympathy to a broken world."

Earlier, Dr. Sanchetti, in his brief address, told us that he drew inspiration from the shining example of Beloved Dadaji and from the several philanthropic activities of the Brotherhood Association. He said that he would always keep before himself the ideal of *seva*, service of the poor and broken ones, which was very dear to the heart of Beloved Dada. He added that he would utilise the award in the service of the economically backward patients.

The Highest Achievement of Life

Dada Yagna is celebrated every month on the *Ekadasi* day,—the day on which Beloved Dadaji put off his body. This month, the sacred day fell on the 12th. The programme, which commenced from the 10th, included *akhand path* of the *Guru Granth Sahib*, *Nam Kiritan Prakirma* in which the St. Mira's School students also participated, kindling of the sacred *havan* fire and, above all, service of the *sufed posh* sisters who flock to the sacred shrine to receive help both in cash and kind. The *Daridra Narayana* and brother birds were also fed on this day.

At the evening satsang on the 12th, hundreds gathered to

listen to Beloved Dada's recorded *upadesh*. Beloved Dada said :—"The highest achievement of life is *chitta-shanti*, peace,—peace of the mind and peace of the heart. And you do not achieve *chitta-shanti* until you have gathered your powers within. Then your soul becomes strong, and all around you the world smiles. The world is in tune with you. The world becomes your brother. The Self becomes the friend of self."

A Hidden Life in the Hidden God

The 27th of September was celebrated on the Mira Campus as the Shanti Yagna day. This is a monthly feature of the Brotherhood Association, and includes *akhand path* of the *Noori Granth*, recitations from various scriptures, Brother J. P. Vaswani's discourse on the life of dear Shanti, kindling of the sacred *havan* fire, and service of the *sufed posh* sisters. Uniforms and shoes worth over Rs. 2000/- were given to the needy school children who were very dear to sister Shanti's loving heart. And as the children received sister Shanti's gift, their unspoken joy was revealed through their innocent eyes.

In his discourse at the evening satsang on the 28th, Brother J. P. Vaswani said :—"Sister Shanti was a truly wonderful soul. She had no worldly ambitions. She shunned the glare and glaze of life. She lived a hidden life in the hidden God. She entered deeper and deeper into herself. She became a hidden root; and out of the root sprang flowers of beauty."

Visit to Bombay

Sister Hari P. Vaswani left for Bombay on the 18th of September and during her brief stay there, addressed meetings at different places and spoke on the life and message of Beloved Dada. Her visit to Bombay is always a source of joy and inspiration specially to the members of the "Mira Union."

Industrial Unit

The Brotherhood Association's Welfare Fund's "Industrial Unit" started functioning in the year 1971, and is making steady progress under the able supervision of Shri Atu L. Relwani, a dedicated worker, who spent many years in the company of Beloved Dada. This Department gives opportunities to the needy sisters to work and earn their living.

[Contd. on page 28]



ST. FRANCIS

**"It is in giving oneself that one receives, it is in dying
that one is raised up to eternal life"**

— St. Francis

Rgd. No. PNC-122

EAST AND WEST SERIES

[Monthly]

An Interpreter of the Life of the Spirit

The "East and West Series" seeks to spread the message of the saints and sages, the prophets and *rishis* of Humanity. They have appeared in all ages. They have sanctified both East and West.

Annual Subscription

In India:—Rs. 3/-; outside India :—8 s. or \$ 1.50 or equivalent.

Life subscription:—Rs. 100/- or £ 10 or \$ 30.00

For a specimen copy send stamps worth 50 p.

Write to:—

The Manager, "East and West Series,"
10, Sadhu Vaswani Path, Mira Nagar, Poona-1, (India).

EAST AND WEST SERIES

Some of the numbers issued so far :—

- | | | |
|----------|--|-----------------------------------|
| No. 116. | Pictures From the Buddha | |
| No. 128. | The Upanishads and the Modern Man | |
| No. 145. | The Great-Souled Gandhi | |
| No. 146. | Guru Nanak: Glory of India | |
| No. 168. | The Divine Flute Player | |
| No. 176. | Shanti Speaks | |
| No. 177. | Blessed are the Merciful! | |
| No. 190. | Thoughts For Meditation | |
| No. 191. | Jamshed Nusserwanjee : A Prophet of the Poor | |
| No. 77. | Three Prophets | Each 50 p. or 1s. or 20 cents |
| No. 88. | The Dedicated Life | |
| No. 91. | Torch-bearers | |
| No. 97. | Through Darkness to Light | |
| No. 130. | The Way of Service | |
| No. 153. | Mary Magdeline | |
| No. 158. | Why India Lives | |
| No. 170. | The Call of India's Culture | |
| No. 197. | Pictures From Mystics | Each 75 p. or 1s. 6d. or 30 cents |
| No. 66. | Ten Witnesses | |
| No. 79. | Sons of Krishna | |
| No. 87. | Education : What India Needs | |
| No. 94. | Four Men of Destiny | |
| No. 100. | Born to Serve | |
| No. 165. | A Child of God | |
| No. 175. | Garland of Letters | Each Re. 1/- or. 2s. or 40 cents |

Printed by P. H. Ramchandani at Lokasangraha Press, 1786,

Sadashiv Peth, Poona-30 and published by him from

Gita Publishing House, 10 Sadhu Vaswani Path, Mira Nagar, Poona 1.

Owned by P. N. Manchandya

Editor : J. P. VASWANI

Price : 50 p. or 1s. or 20 cents